

**ABSTRACT**

A data processing system that facilitates the buying and selling of specialty chemicals. A uniform standard and specification is established for each specialty chemical that is being offered for sale via the system. The uniform standard and specification is advantageously supplier independent so that a prospective purchaser can directly compare offerings from different suppliers. A prospective purchaser defines a requirement for a specialty chemical that it wishes to purchase. The requirement, which defines acceptable ranges for the characteristics that make up the standard, is input into the data processing system. The requirement is compared, in the data processing system, with analyses of batches of the specialty chemical that are available for purchase through the data processing system in an attempt to find a batch that satisfies the requirement. An indicium of a batch satisfying the requirement is output, from the data processing system, to the prospective purchaser.